awaiting inestment decision excluding re-organisation projects is given below:

Company	Number of Projects sanctoned during 8th Plan	Numer of Projects formulated awaiting investment decision
Eastern Coalfields Ltd.	2	2
Bharat Coking Coal Ltd.	0	1
Central Coalfields Ltd.	7	11
Northern Coalfields Ltd.	0	2
Western Coalfields Ltd.	8	6
South Eastern Coalfields Ltd.	11	2
Mahanadi Coalfields Ltd.	1	3
North Eastern Coalfields	..	..
Singareni Colleiries Company Ltd.	6	9

The investment decision on there projects will depend on teenno-economic appraisal, and availability of funds.

(b) and (c) Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973 has been amended w.e.f. 9.6.1993 to allow private sector participation in coal mining. This amendment enables companies engaged in power generation or washing of coal obtained from a mine and such other end uses as may be notified by Government from time to time to carry out coal mining. This is in addition to the existing provision enabling companies engaged in the production of iron and steel to carry out coal mining. Washing of coal obtained from a mine has also now been opened to the private sector.

The following are the guidelines adopted for allocation of blocks to the private sector for coal mining for power generation:

(i) Preferably blocks in green field areas where basic infrastructure like road, rail links etc. is yet to be developed should be given to the private sector. The areas where CIL has already invested in creating such infrastructure for opening new mines should not be handed over to the private sector, except on reimbursement of costs.

(ii) The blocks offered to private sector should be at reasonable distance from existing mine* and projects of Coal india Ltd. (CIL) in order to avoid operational problems.

(iii) Blocks already identified for development by CIL where adequate funding is on hand or in sight should not be offered to the private sector.

(iv) Private sector should be asked to bear full cost of exploration in these blocks which may be offered.

(v) For identifying blocks the re-quirement of coal for about 30 years would be considered.

Foreign collaborations in coal mining

7588. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR. AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) what are reasons for which various foreign collaborations in coal mining are being sought;

(b) whether it is a fact that techno-economic compulsion like planning and

designing of large size open cast mints for rapid expansion of coal production necessitated such foreign collaboration;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Coal India Limited have claimed that they are in a position to offer development technology for large scale open cast mining to China;

(d) if so, whether there is contradiction; between the above stated statements; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) Foreign collaboration in the coal sector is sought to acquire modern mining technology, procure sophisticated high capacity equipment, give training to mining personnel in mproved techniques, facilitate induction of productivity-oriented technologies, tackle difficult geo-mining conditions, beneficiate coal and also to obtain concessional external assistance to meet import costs.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) Indian coal mining Indus-tcy has adequate technical know-how to offer to countries like China, where opencast mining is not yet fully developed.

Coal price determination structure

7589. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR « AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the existing coal price determination structure is not transparent;

(b) what have been the considerations for upward revision of coal prices so many times within a very short period of one or two years;

(c) whether one of the reasons for this is the inefficiency of the officials of Coal industry and upward manipulation of cost;

(d) whether Government have received complaints with regard to (c) above; and

(e) if so, what action has been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (e) The prices of coal are determined in accordance with an escalation formula decided by Bureau of Industrial Costs & Prices (BICP). The formula being objective and based on priceindices, the question of any manipulation of costs by coal companies does not arise. The prices are generally revised once in a year to neutralise the impact of increases in cost indices. An earlier revision is also allowed in case of any quantum increase in costs Such as wage revision, which cannot be accommodated by the coal companies within the existing price structure.

Although there have been no Comp-laints alleging manipulation of costs, there has been some criticism of coal-price increases from coal consumers. Government has been advising coal companies to make all efforts for improving efficiency and reducing costs. However, the impact due to the increased costs of inputs beyond the control of coal companies has to be neutralised by periodical increases in prices so as to enable the coal companies to remain profitable and generate resources for investment.

Time and cost over rung in coal mining' projects

7590. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) which are the coal mining projects where time and cost over runs-have been reported;

(b) whether the officials of the Coal Ministry and Coal India Limited were involved in the preparation of project report, their execution and monitoring in respect of these projects;

(c) if so, the reasons for the time and cost over runs that have occurred;

(d) whether the concerned officials have been made accountable:

(e) if so, details thereof; and